

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN  
SOUTHERN DIVISION

TERRY LOUIS WORD, #138979,

Petitioner,

Case No. 22-cv-10802

HON. MARK A. GOLDSMITH

v.

BECKY CARL,

Respondent.

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**OPINION AND ORDER DISMISSING THE PETITION FOR A WRIT OF  
HABEAS CORPUS AND DENYING A CERTIFICATE OF APPEALABILITY**

Michigan prisoner Terry Louis Word (Petitioner) filed a pro se petition for a writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254 challenging his 2019 Washtenaw County Circuit Court conviction for third-degree criminal sexual assault (incapacitated victim) for which he was sentenced as a fourth habitual offender to 16 to 24 years in prison. (Dkt. 1). The matter is before the Court on Respondent's notice that the case has been rendered moot due to Petitioner's death on September 4, 2023. (Dkt. 11). The Michigan Department of Corrections Offender Tracking Information System (OTIS) indicates that Petitioner has been discharged from custody.<sup>1</sup> See Offender Profile, <https://perma.cc/2YBY-E96H>.

A prisoner's death during the pendency of his habeas proceedings renders his habeas action moot. See Claiborne v. United States, 551 U.S. 87 (2007) (per curiam opinion vacating circuit

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<sup>1</sup> The OTIS website explains: "An offender who is discharged from their sentence is no longer under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Corrections for that sentence. There are several ways in which offenders discharge from their sentences" including "death." <https://perma.cc/5XNK-BBC8>.

court judgment as moot due to death of petitioner). Because Petitioner has died, the Court concludes that his habeas claims and this case are moot. The Court dismisses with prejudice the petition for a writ of habeas corpus.

The Court concludes that jurists of reason could not debate the correctness of the Court's procedural ruling. See 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c); Fed. R. App. P. 22(b); Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484–85 (2000). Accordingly, the Court denies a certificate of appealability. This case is closed.

**SO ORDERED.**

Dated: July 25, 2025  
Detroit, Michigan

s/Mark A. Goldsmith  
MARK A. GOLDSMITH  
United States District Judge

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

The undersigned certifies that the foregoing document was served upon counsel of record and any unrepresented parties via the Court's ECF System to their respective email or First-Class U.S. mail addresses disclosed on the Notice of Electronic Filing on July 25, 2025.

s/Joseph Heacox  
JOSEPH HEACOX  
Case Manager